The next annual summit is scheduled to be held in Moscow in 2005.

(d) Not applicable.

(e) Not applicable.

British Foreign Policy towards PoK

2524. SHRI R.K.ANAND:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Britain has appointed an honorary Consul at Mirpur in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir;

(b) if so, whether it is an indication of change in British foreign **policy** towards PoK;

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) British High Commission has clarified that the Honorary Consul **was** appointed only to provide consular service to the large Mirpuri community in the UK and stated that this step did not have any bearing on the issue of recognition or political issues involved.

(c) Government has, through the British High Commission in New Delhi, conveyed its objection to the decision as the concerned action is related to an Indian territory presently under illegal occupation of Pakistan.

Indo-Afghan Co-operation

2525. SHRI LALIT SURI:
SHRI R.S. GAVAI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Afghan President recently visited New Delhi and had discussions with Indian Prime Minister;

(b) if so, the nature of talks held between the representatives of two countries; and

(c) the areas identified by India for helping Afghanistan in its rehabilitation and the nature of assistance proposed to be provided by India for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) President Karzai of Afghanistan visited India from 23-25 February 2005. He called on the President and held delegation level talks with the Prime Minister. In the discussions, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations including India's assistance to Afghanistan's reconstruction effort. India has committed US $ 500 million over the period 2002-2008 for the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. India has undertaken, in partnership with the Afghan government, projects in a wide range of sectors, including power, road construction, agriculture, industry, telecommunications, information & broadcasting, health and education.

Strengthening of Maoist in Nepal

†2526. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently USA has also taken note of the reality that Maoist terrorists in Nepal are constantly gaining strength;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that the situation developed from gaining strength constantly by the terrorists in the neighbouring country is a matter of concern to India also; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the fresh steps taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The US Government has shared with us its concern at the growth of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.